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Washington, D.C. - Joined by family and friends, Peter Welch was sworn in today as Vermont's 11th Governor.

Welch then cast his first vote to elect the nation's first female Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

Comprehensive ethics reform, championed by the new Democratic leadership, is expected to pass.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 4, 2007

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Welch sworn in, casts first votes for new Speaker

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Welch then cast his first vote to elect the nation's first female Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

Comprehensive ethics reform, championed by the new Democratic leadership, is expected to pass the House.

"It's a great honor to be serving Vermonters and begin changing the direction of this country. Today marks the beginning of a new chapter in American history."

"Passing ethics reform is an important first step for fresh start as Congress begins an aggressive agenda."

"In our first 100 legislative hours, we will pass legislation to restore fiscal responsibility in Washington, fund education, and protect the environment."

Welch was also asked by House leadership to preside on the House floor, scheduled for 10 p.m. this evening.

The ethics reform bans gifts from lobbyists and lobbyist financed travel, prohibits use of company planes for official business.

In addition, the reforms include provisions to get Congress back to work by reinstating long-practiced deadlines.

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Welch made restoring "Pay-go" budgeting and a return to fiscal responsibility a cornerstone of his campaign

"We have hit the ground running and Congress is finally doing the work Americans expect us to do," added